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CLAIMS

1. A method comprising:
loading a reflection image into memory;
retrieving an environment texture sample from an environment map based
on a reflection vector stored in a pixel of the reflection image; and
applying the environment texture sample to the object.
2. The method of claim 1, wherein the loading comprises:
retrieving a reflection texture sample comprising red, green, and blue color
data; and
storing the red, green, and blue color data of the reflection texture sample as
red, green, and blue color data of a pixel of the object.
3. The method of claim 2, wherein the retrieving comprises interpreting
the red, green, and blue color data of the pixel as the reflection vector.
4. The method of claim 3, wherein the retrieving comprises retrieving
the environment texture sample comprising red, green, and blue color data from
the environment map based on the interpreted reflection vector.
5. The method of claim 4, wherein the applying comprises replacing
the red, green, and blue color data of the pixel with the red, green, and blue color
data of the environment texture sample.

1 6. The method of claim 3, further comprising perturbing the interpreted
2 reflection vector prior to retrieving the environment texture sample.

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4 7. The method of claim 1, wherein the loading, the retrieving, and the
5 applying are performed during a single pass through a graphics pipeline.

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7 8. The method of claim 6, further comprising storing a result in a frame
8 buffer.

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10 9. The method of claim 1, wherein the loading is performed during a
11 first pass through a graphics pipeline and the retrieving and the applying are
12 performed during a second pass through the graphics pipeline.

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14 10. The method of claim 9, further comprising:
15 storing the reflection image in a frame buffer; and
16 replacing the reflection image in the frame buffer with a result of
17 application of the environment texture sample.

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19 11. The method of claim 10, further comprising:
20 loading the reflection image in a texture memory; and
21 loading the environment map in the texture memory prior to performing the
22 retrieving and the applying.

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24 12. The method of claim 1, wherein the retrieving comprises retrieving
25 the environment texture sample from a cube environment map.

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2 13. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
3 generating a plurality of reflection images, wherein each of the plurality of
4 reflection images corresponds to a particular viewpoint; and
5 loading a predetermined reflection image chosen from the plurality of
6 reflection images into the memory.

7
8 14. The method of claim 1, wherein the loading, the retrieving, and the
9 applying are performed in real time.

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11 15. A method comprising
12 retrieving a texture sample from a texture map, the texture sample
13 containing reflection data;
14 using the reflection data in the texture sample to obtain an environment
15 texture sample in an environment map; and
16 applying the environment texture sample to an object.

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18 16. The method of claim 15, wherein the applying comprises replacing
19 red, green, and blue color data of the pixel with red, green, and blue color data of
20 the environment texture sample.

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22 17. The method of claim 15, further comprising perturbing the reflection
23 data prior to using the reflection data to obtain the environment texture sample.

1 18. The method of claim 15, wherein the using comprises using the
2 reflection data to obtain an environment texture sample in a cube environment
3 map.

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5 19. The method of claim 15, further comprising storing, in memory, a
6 result of said applying the environment texture sample to the object.

7
8 20. A method comprising:
9 interpreting data in a pixel as a reflection vector; and
10 using the reflection vector to obtain an environment texture sample in an
11 environment map.

12
13 21. The method of claim 20, wherein the interpreting comprises
14 interpreting red, green, and blue color data of the pixel as the reflection vector.

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16 22. The method of claim 20, further comprising perturbing the reflection
17 vector prior to using the reflection vector to obtain the environment texture
18 sample.

19
20 23. The method of claim 20, wherein the using comprises using the
21 reflection data to obtain an environment texture sample in a cube environment
22 map.

23
24 24. The method of claim 20, further comprising applying the
25 environment texture sample to an object.

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2 25. A method comprising:
3 retrieving a texture sample from a texture map; and
4 using the texture sample to retrieve an environment texture sample from an
5 environment map.

6
7 26. A computer program product comprising a computer useable
8 medium having computer program logic recorded thereon for enabling a processor
9 to render a computer scene, the computer program logic comprising:

10 a texture map comprising reflection data;

11 a texture map sampling procedure that enables the processor to obtain a
12 first texture sample from the texture map and apply the first texture sample to an
13 object;

14 an environment map; and

15 an environment map sampling procedure that enables the processor to
16 obtain a second texture sample from the environment map based on the first
17 texture sample and apply the second texture sample to the object.

18
19 27. The computer program product of claim 26, wherein the texture map
20 sampling procedure enables the processor to obtain red, green, and blue color data
21 from the texture map and store the red, green, and blue color data as a pixel of the
22 object.

23
24 28. The computer program product of claim 27, wherein the
25 environment map sampling procedure enables the processor to use the red, green,

1 and blue color data of the pixel as a reflection vector to obtain the second texture
2 sample.

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4 29. The computer program product of claim 26, wherein the
5 environment map comprises a cube environment map.

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7 30. The computer program product of claim 26, further comprising a
8 texture map generating procedure that enables the processor to generate a
9 particular texture map comprising reflection data based on a particular viewpoint.

10
11 31. A computer readable medium storing computer-readable instructions
12 that, when executed, direct a graphics processing system to:

13 interpret data in one of a reflection image or a texture map as a reflection
14 vector;

15 use the reflection vector to obtain an environment texture sample in an
16 environment map; and

17 apply the environment texture sample to an object.

18
19 32. The computer readable medium of claim 31, further comprising
20 computer-readable instructions that, when executed, direct the graphics processing
21 system to interpret red, green, and blue color data as the reflection vector.

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23 33. The computer readable medium of claim 31, further comprising
24 computer-readable instructions that, when executed, direct the graphics processing
25

1 system to perturb the reflection vector prior to using the reflection vector to obtain
2 the environment texture sample.

3
4 34. A system for environment mapping, comprising:
5 an application program having computer program logic, an environment
6 map, and a texture map comprising reflection data;
7 a processor for implementing the computer program logic; and
8 a graphics subsystem, under the control of the application program and the
9 processor, for rendering an object using the texture map and the environmental
10 map.

11
12 35. The system of claim 34, wherein the graphics subsystem comprises:
13 a texture memory;
14 a frame buffer; and
15 a rasterizer coupled to the texture memory and the frame buffer.

16
17 36. The system of claim 34, wherein the graphics subsystem is
18 configured to use a texture sample retrieved from the texture map to obtain an
19 environment texture sample from the environment map and to apply the
20 environment texture sample to the object.

21
22 37. The system of claim 34, wherein the graphics subsystem is
23 configured to retrieve an environment texture sample from the environment map
24 based on a reflection vector stored in a texture sample from the texture map and to
25 apply the environment texture sample to the object.

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38. The system of claim 34, wherein the graphics subsystem is configured to retrieve a texture sample from the texture map, the texture sample containing reflection data, the graphics subsystem being further configured to use the reflection data in the texture sample to obtain an environment texture sample in the environment map.